

Message Text

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71

ACTION VOE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 CIAE-00 FBIE-00

INSE-00 NSAE-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 /028 W
----- 079656

R 031439Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 340

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY/NICOSIA 097

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 7547

REF: A. STATE 260409; B. DAMASCUS 5180; C. DAMASCUS 7081

1. NIVS - LEBANESE APPLICANTS IN DAMASCUS:

	ISSUED	REFUSED	TOTAL
AUG:	463	310	773
SPET:	547	131	678
OCT:	347	252	559

2. IVS - LEBANESE APPLICANTS IN DAMASCUS:

	ISSUED	REFUSED	TOTAL
AUG:	213	3	216
SEPT:	497	3	500
OCT:	459	1	460

3. NIV APPLICATNS: EMBASSY STILL HAS SOME FAMILIES APPLYING TO VISIT RELATIVES, AND PARENTS WISHING SEE CHILDREN WORKING OR STUDYING IN U.S. THERE ARE OCCASIONAL BUSINESSMEN REQUESTING B-IS. ALSO, F-1 AND PROSPECTIVE STUDENT APPLICATIONS CONTINUE ALTHOUGH AT A DECREASED RATE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR. LARGEST SEGMENT OF PRESENT NIV APPLICANTS ARE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO STATE THEY WISH VISIT RELATIVES, FRIENDS OR ONLY TOURIST SITES. IT IS THIS TYPE OF APPLICANT WHICH REPRESENTS MOST OF OUR REFUSALS.

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TIES OUTSIDE THE U.S. APPEAR TENUOUS AND FREQUENTLY

THE APPLICANT HAS NO INVITATION FROM PERSONS IN THE U.S. WE FIND IT DIFFICULT ACCEPT THAT YOUNG PEOPLE WHOSE FAMILIES ARE REMAINING IN LEBANON BE CONSIDERED REASONABLE OR LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR SAFEHAVEN FROM FIGHTING. NIV APPLICATIONS CONTINUE TO BE SYMPATHATICALLY CONSIDERED WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO INVITATIONS FROM AMERICAN CITIZENS AND PERMANENT RESIDENTS. WE HAVE NEVERTHELESS ENCOUNTERED IN RECENT WEEKS AN INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF APPLICANTS UNABLE ESTABLISH ELIGIBILITY FOR REASONS CITED ABOVE.

4. IV APPLICANTS: IV APPLICANTS ARE TYPICAL OF LEBANESE WHO HAVE BEEN MOVING TO U.S. FOR PAST SEVERAL YEARS. SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IS LARGE INCREASE IN NUMBER APPLYING IVS AT PRESENT, ENCOURAGED TO LEAVE LEBANON BECAUSE OF FIGHTING AND GLOOMY ECONOMIC PICTURE, AND NOT IN TYPE OF APPLICANT. WORK WAS GREATEST HERE IN SEPTEMBER WHILE WE WERE COMPLETING ACTION ON PARTICULARLY HEAVY DEMAND CAUSED BY HIATUS BETWEEN SUSPENSION BEIRUT OPERATIONS AND EXPANSION DAMASCUS STAFF. NO BACKLOG WAS PERMITTED DEVELOP AND AND CASES ARE BEING EXPEDITED. WE NOTE SLIGHT DECREASE IN DEMAND IN OCTOBER AS COMPARED SEPTEMBER AND BELIEVE THAT IN FORSEEABLE FUTURE LEVEL OF LEBANESE APPLICANTS SHOULD REMAIN ABOUT EQUAL TO OCTOBER, WHICH BY THE WAY IS ALMOST TWICE AVERAGE LEBANESE WORKLOAD IN BEIRUT IN RECENT YEARS.

5. EMBASSY IS NOT RECEIVING SIGNIFICANT NUMBER INQUIRIES ABOUT IMMIGRATION FROM PERSONS OTHER THAN THOSE WHO KNOW RELATIVES IN U.S. HAVE INITIATED PETITIONS. WE RECEIVE ONLY OCCASIONAL REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION ON LABOR CERTIFICATION AND INVESTOR STATUS.

6. OVER PAST THREE MONTHS WE RECALL ONLY ABOUT EIGHT INQUIRIES CONCERNING REFUGEE STATUS. IN RECENT WEEKS WE DO NOT RECALL ANY SUCH INQUIRIES. WE BELIEVE EXPLANATIONS RESTS MAINLY ON GENERAL KNOWLEDGE IN LOCAL LEBANESE COMMUNITY THAT USG HAS NO SPECIAL REFUGEE UNCLASSIFIED

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PROGRAM.

7. AS NOTED IN REFTEL B MAJORITY OF APPLICANTS HERE FOR BOTH NIVS AND IVS CONTINUE TO BE PRESENTLY RESIDENT OF LEBANON, WHO ARE VISITING DAMASCUS ONLY BRIEFLY.

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